

Defector

Soviet Official Defects to U.S. With List of Spies in Belgium

From News Dispatches

The Belgian government announced yesterday Soviet trade official had defected, traveled to the United States and there turned over a list of 37 Soviet spies and their activities in Belgium.

The defection and report on Soviet espionage activities was the second within a month by a Soviet official, following by four weeks a similar incident in London that led to the expulsion of 105 Soviets from Britain.

Belgian government sources said that necessary steps would be taken through diplomatic channels against 37 Russians named by the official who defected from his post here. They did not elaborate.

The Belgian foreign ministry confirmed in a brief statement reports that a Soviet trade mission official, Anatoly Chebotarev, had defected and had been granted political asylum in the United States.

In Washington, the State Department announced yesterday that Tchegotarev is in the United States after having been granted political asylum.

In its announcement, the department said the Russian recently contacted the U.S. em-

bassy in the Belgian capital and asked for asylum. It said the asylum was granted.

There were no further details from the State Department.

Chebotarev, 38, disappeared Oct. 3 and was reported missing the next day by the Soviet embassy. The Russian-made car he was using when he disappeared was found four days later in the northern port town of Zeebrugge.

"Chebotarev has made statements about the activities of Soviet citizens in Belgium," the foreign ministry statement end.

said. "The government was informed of them.

"As in the past, the government does not allow any activity which might endanger its security and that of international organizations established on its territory," the statement said.

The ministry referred to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe and the European Common Market, all of which have their headquarters in Belgium.

Police sources said Chebotarev had supplied a list of at least 37 Soviet spies operating

in Belgium. The sources quoted Chebotarev as saying at least some of them were employed in monitoring telephone lines used by NATO and SHAPE.

Government sources said Belgium would act quietly, through diplomatic channels, to deal with the threat raised by the alleged spies.

The sources said they did not foresee a mass expulsion such as in Britain, where the Soviets were expelled last month following the defection of a Soviet spy in London.

They said Belgium had been aware of the existence of a number of spies and that Chebotarev's information would help close certain investigations currently under way.

The sources said Belgium's NATO allies were kept informed of its actions. Officials at NATO and SHAPE declined comment.

Police sources said Chebotarev, after leaving his car at Zeebrugge, had been taken to Britain aboard a small boat.

The sources said 16 staff of the Soviet travel organization Intourist and of the Scaldia automobile assembly plant near the NATO headquarters had left for Moscow last week.